



Testimony submitted by Shirley Dazelle RN, Clinical Manager
All About You Collaborative Health Care Services, LLC

Appropriations Public Hearing on the Governor's Proposed FY23 Budget
Adjustments For Human Services Agencies

February 23, 2022

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Moore, Representative
Abercrombie and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

I'm Shirley Dazelle, RN, Clinical Manager for the Torrington office of All About You Collaborative Health Care Services, LLC. All About You provides nursing, physical, occupational, speech therapy, social work, and home health aide services through their offices in Naugatuck, Torrington and East Haven. The Agency, provider owned, participates in Medicare, Medicare Advantage plans, private insurance plans as well as Medicaid. Currently 54% of our clients are enrolled in Medicaid. The Agency is committed to serving a diverse population with medical and/or behavioral health needs.

The service I'm here to discuss with you pertains to our patients with moderate to severe mental health and/or substance abuse disorders requiring medication administration services. Our Torrington office services 186 clients, of which 132 receive daily or twice daily medication administration visits, 41 receives visits by our nurses 1-2 times per week for assessments and medication prepours.

Medication Administration is a task. For a Behavioral Health nurse it is an *opportunity* to observe, listen, assess and educate as well as administer

medications. Processing information can be a challenge for some. Daily reinforcement by the BH nursing team can lead to symptom and risk reduction and an improved quality of life.

However, the Covid Pandemic over the last two years has had an enormous impact on our population. Covid education, masks, hand hygiene, social distancing, symptom management, self imposed or forced isolation became part of every patient visit. With many of our folks, we were the only human contact they would have for weeks at a time. Accessing appropriate community resources to provide additional supports are ongoing as well as facilitating telehealth appointments, food accessibility and basic needs. Collaboration with the medical and psychiatric providers supports the person centered continuity of care. As a nurse and a manager, I'm so proud of the nurses that so caringly provide this service and hope to be able to retain them and recruit staff committed to our mission of putting the needs of our patients first through collaboration, communication, and health education.

We respectfully request the Human Service Budget include the following:

- *Increased reimbursement for Home care medication administration/nursing services by 10.5%, restoring the funding that had been reduced in previous budget years.*
- *Continued Medicaid rate increases to sustain homecare providers in future budget years.*